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ABSTRACT

From amnesia to auditory hallucinations, the symptoms of pathological dissociation are among the most devastating effects of childhood maltreatment. Ways in which therapists can provide a comprehensive developmental approach to understanding, diagnosing, and treating this challenging clinical population are presented in this text. After reviewing the nature and effects of childhood trauma and considering an array of maltreatment outcomes, the volume introduces an empirically grounded model of pathological dissociation. Current knowledge about the psychobiology of multiple personality disorder and other dissociate disorders is incorporated into the text. Each chapter lays out a broad-based treatment approach intended to facilitate the development of impulse control, emotional and behavioral self-regulation, and integrative metacognitive functions. The text is premised on the belief that the best clinical interventions arise from a developmental understanding of pathological dissociation. Issues that receive special focus include the differences between normal and pathological dissociation; documenting and diagnosing dissociative symptoms and behaviors; principles and goals of therapy with dissociative children; risk factors, protective factors, and clinical outcomes; family and institutional contexts of care; and current psychopharmacological approaches to care. Contains an index and approximately 750 references. (RJM)

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